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able for the infinitely varied—in strength, rapidity, and selection—muscular contractions which human needs require. Let any one imagine the performances of an expert pugilist, wrestler, swordsman, rope-dancer, or, more to the purpose, an eloquent orator speaking and gesticulating vehemently; let him reflect on the several muscles brought into play, the frequent changes of their contractions necessary, and conceive, if he can, of his employing a foreign force and directing it on these muscles at will; or suppose him interchanging telegrams between the brain and the muscles while he is pronouncing 1600 letters in a minute, with the gestures thrown in. It is evident that it is not *via* the brain, or *via* pudding, or any other *via*, that the mind acts on the muscles to produce such results. Nothing short of the intimate presence of the mind to the muscles can account for it. Those compromising physiologists who admit a force from without, under the direction of the mind, admit enough for our purpose. For force coming into the body from without, either must *have*, or must have *not*, a direction. If it has no direction, it requires force to give it one. If it has direction, it requires force, certainly, to alter that direction. And if the mind directs, it must furnish that force. And if so, what need is there of any other? Consciousness reveals the *person* as the gritter of the teeth, and that "it is not the blow that kills—it is the *soul* that strikes." And, in accordance with its evidence, we conclude that, in the activities of the human body, mind avails itself of the physical powers and properties as far as they are available, and supplements them with its own as the crowning work of spirit in matter.

Rockport, Mass., Dec. 22, 1874. BENJ. HASKELL, M.D.

The Definition of Life.

Editor of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy:

In the preference given to the definition of life by Cuvier, I think Dr. Brinton is also at fault; and especially in the stress he lays on form as "the gist of the distinction between organic and inorganic nature." Not only is form manifested in crystalline structures, but each elementary or compound substance brings forth according to its kind. And, to complete the parallel, the Crystal after its death or dissolution, if revived, returns in its original form with mathematical exactness. If therefore we accept, on the authority of the Doctor, and the Poet, the doctrine that

"Eternal form shall still divide
Eternal soul from all beside"

after time closes, still less can we agree with the Doctor that form is the pathognomonic symptom of life. For how can that which exists before life begins, and continues after life is ended, be the criterion of life itself? The definition of life by Cuvier, not only in respect to form, but in all its essential points, is as applicable to the inorganic world as to the organic. What is the growth of the crystal but the assimilation of surrounding substances by a fixed and regular process, which he (Cuvier) also ascribes to life as its special prerogative? The fact that this growth is an accretion from without, while organic growth is from within, is no more a diremption of the process of life than the involution of the skeleton from circumference to the centre in the passage from the invertebrated to the vertebrated class of animals.

It is not in contrasting organic with inorganic nature that the true idea of life is to be gained. Nature is one in its triad of mineral, vegetable, and animal life;—a column with mineral life for its base, vegetable life for its shaft, supporting animal life for its capital: its parts differing indeed in outline, but composed of the same granite throughout; each department producing all that it is capable of producing (under its respective conditions) of beauty, utility, and truth. Thus in mineral life, with the simplest materials, and the merely solvent and buoyant qualities of water, obviating weight and friction, and allowing free movement to the particles according to their intrinsic tendencies, the above ideas manifest themselves in every form consistent with mathematical limitations. In vegetable life, with more compound materials, and with the flowing or carrying properties of water in addition to its solvent and buoyant properties, with the mathematical restrictions removed, the imagination has free play to develope every conceivable form of truth and utility, and to address four out of the five senses of man in innumerable forms of beauty—beauty to the touch, beauty to the eye, beauty of odor, beauty of savor. Why the ear is not also addressed may appear when we consider that that organ has especial reference to animal life. While the other senses are agencies which bring the mind into relation with the chemical and mechanical properties of things in order that it may *know* them, hearing and voice establish relations which enable one animal to *know* the thoughts in the minds of other animals, and it, accordingly, waits for music and speech before it surrenders to the charms of beauty. It is therefore the social sense (*par excellence*). Finally, while in animal life the materials are so highly organized as to require no chemical composition or decomposition for their assimilation, we have in addition to the static properties of water and its flowing properties, its propulsive powers, which present the molecules equally to all points, irrespective of position or attrition, in readiness for assimilation, or for the development of force. Thus Nature recognized Hydrostatics, Hydraulics, and Hydrodynamics, before man invented these hard words. Her progress is from simple to more complex materials, through successively higher and higher agencies, and broader limitations, to correspondingly greater production. She evinces a knowledge of the mechanical and chemical qualities of things in vegetable life, by the prickly and acrid exudations she throws out for defence on the surface of her products, by her acts in the sensitive plants, and by her discrimination in the absorption of nutritive materials. This, however, is in immediate contiguity. For, as she is stationary in her products in this department, she needs not a more discursive knowledge to direct her. But in animal life, the great function of which is motion around and among material things, she needs a *distant* knowledge of the same to direct this motion. Hence, in addition to touch and taste, the intellectualized expressions for the above, she builds up the organs of smell and sight, that, by the physical impressions made by distant objects on them, and through them on her, her attention may be averted and fixed on those objects until she knows them, and regulates her movements accordingly. Thus all the senses are but forms of knowing; while their organs are but apparatus constructed in adaptation to the laws of the physical causes which operate on them. In this way also we come to understand the seeming anomaly of there being two pairs of organs to bring the mind in relation with only two classes of sensations: the one pair being the product of stationary vegetable life and transmitted as an inheritance to animal life, while the other supplies the direct wants of animal life itself.

Coëtaneously with this development of organs, through the medium of which external forces act on the mind, a tissue is generated through which the power of cohesion, with movement of the cohering molecules according to will, is made the medium by which the mind transmits its own forces on external things. This tissue is distributed into a variety of apparatus by means of bony levers and otherwise, all of which are connected with the aforesaid organs of the senses by means of still another tissue, whose exaggerated importance blinds the eyes of all professorial teachers to the simplicity of truth on this subject—viz. the nervous tissue—the sole function of which is to continue on the minute impulses made on it to whatever organs are to be thrown into activity by the sensations arising from those impressions. The nervous system, when active, may be said to reduce the whole body to a point. Its effect is to render an impression made on one part as if made on all other parts; and this it does simply as a result of the physical properties of its structure.

The human body, therefore, may be said to consist *essentially* of two great classes of organs, viz. those by which external material causes act on the mind, and those by which the mind reacts on the external world. All other organs are either to build these up, to keep them in activity, or to reproduce them when worn out: such are the organs of digestion, of circulation, of respiration, of generation, &c. To form these two classes of organs, to preserve them, and to subject them to the service of the mind, is the particular work of animal life. But life in its broadest generality is the involution of mind into matter for the positing of material laws and causes; and its evolution as individual mind or soul, with a counter-system of organs (viz. the organs of sense and motion) which it has wrought out for itself, and by which it establishes, homœopathically, or by the law of impulse, relations of action and reaction with those laws and causes which are its previous work. BENJ. HASKELL, M.D.

P. S. We are told by Prof. Tyndall that he sees in matter "the promise and potency of every form and quality of life"; and his followers inform us that he does not intend to sink mind into matter, but is about endowing matter with certain new and unheard of properties which will raise it to mind, and thus enable it to explain everything. Are they oblivious of the fact that biologists have had a *carte blanche* of all possible properties of matter since the time of Haller, and have produced from them nothing but the contradictions of experimental physiology? Are they aware that, with all their studies, labors, and *sacrifices*, of more than a century, they are not so near a systemization of the facts of the anatomy, physiology and pathology of the nervous system as was Aristotle when he left off thinking? Or, do they need another century of delving among vital endowments of nerve, of torturing dogs and frogs, to teach them that these facts utterly refuse to assimilate, except under the conceptions of *mind* and matter?

Rockport, Mass., March 5, 1875. B. H.

Is Man a finite Being?

Mr. Editor:

In the October number, 1874, *Jour. Spec. Phil.*, Mr. Kroeger says: "If any finite being is immortal, i.e. continues to lead a self-conscious life throughout all time, it necessarily remains always more or less immoral, because it remains finite." Now, I ask Mr. K. if his hypothesis does not involve a contradiction? How can an "immortal" and "self-conscious" being, living throughout all time, be or remain finite? Is the term "finite" predicable of such a "being"? Or, rather, is the term "finite" predicable of "being" at all? Is it not a theological rather than a philosophical term, and one that has no place in the vocabulary of a science of pure "being"? If, then, the "being" assumed in the hypothesis is not finite, does not the corollary of "immortal immorality" reduce to zero?

North Lawrence, Kansas. LIGHTSEEKER.

BOOK NOTICES.

German Rationalism, in its Rise, Progress, and Decline, in relation to Theologians, Scholars, Poets, Philosophers, and the People: A Contribution to the Church History of the 18th and 19th centuries. By Dr. K. R. Hagenbach, Professor of Theology in the University of Basle. Edited and translated by Rev. Wm. Leonhard Gage and Rev. J. H. W. Stuckenberg. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. For sale by Gray, Baker & Co., St. Louis.

The so-called rationalistic movement is perhaps the most noteworthy in modern theology. At bottom it is the attempt to bring about a perfect unity between faith and insight. That it has generally proved a failure must be confessed when we compare its results with the ideal standard. When, however, we consider the value of these attempts in provoking reaction on the part of orthodox theologians, as well as in developing literature and science, we find the movement quite essential to the divine Purpose in world-history. In the middle ages the pantheistic interpretation of Aristotle by his great Arabian commentators threatened Christianity with an insoluble contradiction between Reason and Faith. Its effect was to stimulate into being a race of sturdy thinkers, among whom Thomas Aquinas stood preëminent and enunciated the speculative basis of the Christian faith in such terms as may stand for valid to this day. The growth of universities and the revival of learning date their birth in the great convocations assembled to hear the scholastic doctors present their theories of faith and reason.

Dr. Hagenbach gives a brief account of the rise of Rationalism in Germany, reviews the characteristics of the eighteenth century, sketches the strife between the Lutherans and Calvinists and the rise of Pietism. The accounts of Lessing and Zinzendorf are of especial value. Herder, Kant, Schiller, Schelling, Jacobi, Fichte, Richter, Goethe, Novalis, Schleiermacher, and Hegel, are discussed in ten chapters. In Chapter XXIV. the author treats of the rise of the Protestant spirit in the Roman Catholic Church during the past and present centuries.